DIRECTIONS FOR TREATMENT OF

CHOLERA,

BY

THE EDINBURGH BOARD OF HEALTH.

THE Edinburgh Board of Health having maturely considered what steps should be taken for checking the Epidemic Cholera, if it should appear in this city, are of opinion that the proper time is now arrived for making public the following directions for the guidance of its inhabitants:

I. The Board are satisfied, that the disease may arise spontaneously from hidden causes; and that it may also become contagious in circumstances not yet ascertained. But they are fully warranted in declaring, that, when it does become contagious, the risk of its spreading in that manner is very much diminished if due attention be paid to cleanliness and sobriety. And they therefore entreat the inhabitants of Edinburgh, in the event of the disease appearing here, not to be misled by exaggerated notions of its contagious nature,—the inevitable tendency of which would be to leave the sick helpless, and without that attendance from friends and others which is more pressingly required in this disease than in any other.

II. Experience has shown, that the most essential precaution for escaping the disease is sobriety,—that *intoxication during the prevalence of the epidemic, is almost sure to be followed by an attack*,—and that those addicted to drinking are the most subject to take cholera, and the most likely to sink under it. In like manner, strict attention to personal cleanliness,—to cleanliness and ventilation of dwelling-houses,—to warm clothing,—to regularity of hours of sleep,—to keeping as much as possible within doors at night,—and to taking food before going out in the morning—may be relied on as important means of security.

III. The Board are providing, that should the disease appear, several Hospitals shall be opened over the city; also, that stations shall be established, where, as well as at the hospitals, medicines and heating apparatus may be procured at all hours of the day and night; and likewise that, if necessary, all night-watchmen shall be supplied with medicines for the immediate use of those who may need them. By these means it will be in the power of every one to procure instant aid.

Notice of the situation of hospitals and stations for medicines will be given the instant the disease may appear.

IV. But to prevent the possibility of delay, especially in the dead of the night, when the disease is very apt to begin, the Board recommend families to provide the following articles:

1. *Mixture.*—Take sulphuric ether and aromatic spirit of hartshorn, of each half an ounce, compound tincture of cinnamon, one ounce. Mix and cork up carefully.

2. *Laudanum.*—An ounce to be kept in readiness.

3. *Pills.*—Take of opium twenty-four grains; camphor, one drachm; spirit of wine and conserve of roses, enough to make a mass of common consistence. Divide into 24 pills.

4. *Clysters.*—Take of laudanum an ounce, tincture of assafœtida two ounces. Mix for keeping.—Before using, mix three tea spoonfuls with a wine-glassful of thin starch; and retain it, when injected, by pressure below with a warm cloth, as long as possible.

5. *Mustard-Poultices.*—Have always at hand four ounces of powdered mustard. A fourth part of this spread over porridge poultices, will be sufficient for one patient.

6. *Hot-Air Bath.*—The Board have approved of a hot-air bath of a simple construction, which may be seen at the Blind Asylum, and made by any carpenter, price about ten shillings. Every family who can afford it ought to have one.

V. No time should be lost in sending for medical aid. But when the disease commences suddenly in a violent form, it is dangerous to lose even the time which must pass before such aid can be had. This form is at once known by sudden weakness, a contracted, ghastly countenance, blueness of the lips, and general coldness, accompanying or preceding vomiting, purging, and cramps. In such cases the friends will, without delay, give a table-spoonful No. 1. with 60 drops of laudanum in half a wine glassful of cold

water. Follow this with a table spoonful of warm spirits and water, or strongly spiced wine. Repeat two tea-spoonful of the mixture, with 30 drops of laudanum, every half hour, if the first dose fail to relieve. If the mixture be vomited, then give two Pills, No. 3, and repeat one every half hour, if the first two fail to relieve or be vomited. But after the vomiting and cramps cease, the mixture or pills must not be repeated without advice.—The Clyster, No. 4, should be resorted to also from the first, and repeated once if not retained.—[N. B. The doses of the Mixture, Laudanum, Pills, and Clyster, must not be exceeded. For children of fourteen, half the doses mentioned, and for children of seven, one-fourth is sufficient.] The Hot air Bath, or if it is not at hand, dry heat over the whole body in any shape such as by hot blankets and hot bricks sand, salt, or bottles of hot water—together with constant rubbing of the whole body,—should likewise bo resorted to from the first. The Mustard-Poultices should, as soon as possible, be applied over the belly and on the soles and calves, and kept on until the patient complains of the smarting.

By the time these measures have been put in force, opportunity will have been given for procuring medical advice: which is indispensable for the treatment afterwards. The Board think it necessary to apprise the Public, that where this disease has prevailed, blood-letting when resorted within the first, second, or third hour from the commencement of the attack, has been very generally found useful along with the other remedies, notwithstanding the appearance of sudden weakness and excessive sinking already mentioned.

VI. By following these rules, and taking prompt advantage of the provision made at the station points, the Board are convinced that very many cases will be checked at the outset But at the same time, they strongly exhort the labouring classes to convey their sick friends with all speed to the hospitals, rather than try to cure them at home, where they can seldom have the means at command. The hospitals will, it is hoped, be so numerous, that one shall be near every one's habitation; and carriages, to serve at the same time as dry heat baths, may be found always ready at the hospitals and stations, for the instant removal of patients at all the hours of the day and night. The Board feel assured, that, by quickly availing themselves of these provisions, working people will get their sick friends brought

ooner and far more effectually under treatment than in any other way; and they must not forget that every minute's delay is highly dangerous.

While the Board think it right to express their apprehension, that in certain circumstances the disease may be communicated by personal intercourse with infected persons or goods, they wish it to be distinctly understood, that as they are satisfied it may also be diffused in other ways, not yet ascertained—as they think it will be impossible in this country to establish a system of internal quarantine, or absolute seclusion of the sick—and as the attempt to do so would throw very many persons into great distress, they do not mean to recommend that any attempts should be made to prevent its diffusion in this city by seclusion of the sick, otherwise than as detailed above.

N. B.—To Apothecaries.—As an inferior laudanum is sold in many shops, apothecaries are cautioned to use only the strong laudanum of the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia.

By order of the Board.

JOHN LEARMONTH, Lord Provost.

16th November, 1831.

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